

May 2, 2002

REGIONALISM AD HOC  
COMMITTEE  
REPORT NO. 5

ALL MEMBERS PRESENT.

1. RESOLVED, that the following items are hereby received and filed.

Item Page -2002 (Comm. 4M-11)  
a. **CLERK, REGIONALISM COMMITTEE:** Memo to Legislator Weinstein Re:  
Summary of 1/31/02 Meeting on Video Arraignments.  
(5-0)

Item Page -2002 (Comm. 6M-8)  
b. **EC BAR ASSOCIATION AID TO INDIGENT PRISONERS SOCIETY:**  
Letter to Legislator Weinstein Re: Electronic Court Appearances.  
(5-0)

Item Page -2002 (Comm. 8M-12)  
c. **NIAGARA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT  
& TOURISM:** Letter to Legislator Weinstein Re: Niagara Power Project  
Relicensing – Funding Request.  
(5-0)

2. Item Page -2002 (Intro. 4-4)  
**WEINSTEIN**

WHEREAS, casino gambling has experienced a rebirth in many states and major United States cities as a means for economically distressed areas to enhanced tourism and economic development in their respective areas, as well as to enhance revenue growth for local, county and state governments, and

WHEREAS, Casino Niagara, the temporary casino located in Niagara Falls, Ontario, has reaped considerable financial rewards as a result of its status as the region's sole casino operation, attracting local residents as well as tourists through its doors, and

WHEREAS, it has been suggested that establishment of casino gambling operations within the County of Erie, specifically within the downtown section of the City of Buffalo - would be a positive step toward enhancing tourism and economic development, and

WHEREAS, the New York State Legislature and the governor have agreed to a compact with the Seneca Nation for three gambling casinos in Western New York. This agreement would provide local municipalities with approximately a 6% benefit, and

WHEREAS, the Legislature may wish to consider a proposal for a municipally-owned casino in downtown Buffalo, with shared revenue between the state and the

county, with distribution of revenues to the cities, towns, villages, and school districts within Erie County, and

WHEREAS, authorization for a municipally owned casino requires an amendment to the New York State Constitution, which must be approved by two successively elected State Legislatures, then submitted to the voters for approval in a referendum, and

WHEREAS, the earliest date for the ratification of a constitutional amendment would be Election Day, 2003

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, if casino gambling were to come to WNY, the Erie County Legislature prefers a municipally owned casino for Erie County for the purposes of enhancing economic development and tourism in our region, and enhancing revenue for New York State, Erie County, and its local governments, and be it further

RESOLVED, since a constitutional amendment would be required to establish a municipally-owned casino, the Erie County Legislature does hereby request the New York State Senate and New York State Assembly to pass such constitutional amendment this year and in 2003 so that it can be presented to the voters in a referendum in November, 2003, and be it further

RESOLVED, that certified copies of this resolution be forwarded to Governor George Pataki, Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, the Western New York State Legislative Delegation, County Executive Joel Giambra and Buffalo Mayor Anthony Masiello.

Fiscal Impact: Impact of Casino Gambling is Positive for Erie County.  
(4-1) Legislator Dale in the Negative.

3.      Item                      Page                      -2002                      (Comm. 9E-33)  
          **COUNTY EXECUTIVE**

WHEREAS, several tourism activities and special events, which will be held in Buffalo and Erie County throughout the next several months, will promote and enhance Erie County's tourism business and national reputation as a tourism destination by (1) focusing on Buffalo and Erie County's cultural life and heritage, (2) featuring our City and County as a major venue for a variety of national sports activities, and (3) providing our residents and visitors from other areas with opportunities to celebrate special community events; and

WHEREAS, these high quality activities, which will provide tens of thousands of our residents and tourists with opportunities to enjoy and experience a variety of high quality recreational and cultural opportunities, will also result in millions of dollars in economic benefits; and

WHEREAS, the major sports events which will take place this spring and summer include the Nissan Buffalo Marathon, USA Soccer - Region 1 Snickers Soccer Tournament, and the USA Track and Field Region II Competition which are being sponsored and promoted by the Buffalo Niagara Convention and Visitors Bureau, and these events are expected to generate an economic impact exceeding \$8 million dollars; and

WHEREAS, the WNED Buffalo Niagara Guitar Festival, which is projected to attract more than 100,000 attendees, is an important part of our national and international marketing efforts which feature Buffalo as a world-class destination for cultural events and venues; and

WHEREAS, the 2002 Binational Tourism Summer Brochure, which resulted from collaborative efforts between the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, New York State, and representatives from Erie and Niagara County, will showcase cultural events, destinations and fesitvals held throughout the summer on both sides of the Niagara River, and these marketing efforts will be coordinated by the Buffalo Niagara Convention and Visitors Bureau who will administer the funds for this brochure; and

WHEREAS, funding from Erie County for the second year of the Regional Cultural Tourism Program, a cooperative program with outreach to and involvement by representatives from the Province of Ontario, New York State, Erie County, Niagara County, and other interested agencies and organizations, will focus on developing the business of cultural tourism in Erie County and the region, and this program will be administered by the Arts Council in Buffalo and Erie County (Arts Council), and guided by the Buffalo Niagara Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Arts Council; and

WHEREAS, the priorities for the Regional Cultural Tourism Program in year two will be the development of a Concierge/Visitors Services Program for our region, analysis and development of cultural tourism products, as well as furthering other County, Bi-county and Binational tourism activities that enhance Erie County's multi-million dollar investment in its cultural and historic assets, sites, events and activities, as part of an economic revitalization strategy for our County and region; and

WHEREAS, the Police Athletic League's Fourth of July Celebration in Delaware Park, and "Canal Fest" sponsored by Canal Fest of the Tonawandas are community-based special events in our area which enhance our quality of life and pride in our City, County and region; and

WHEREAS, funding from Erie County will greatly enhance the marketing and programs of these above-noted events, provide high quality experiences for both residents and visitors from other areas, and result in a very significant return on Erie County's investment.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the County Executive is hereby authorized to enter into the necessary agreements to provide funds, as specified below, to the not-for-profit organizations administering funds for these events and activities; and be it further

RESOLVED, that funds in the amount of \$264,000 are hereby transferred from the Extraordinary County Aid to Local Governments Regionalism/Economic Development Fund (DAC 1109043038301299) to the following new subaccounts under Contractual Agencies in Department 302, Public Benefit Agencies, as monitored by Environment and Planning:

Buffalo Convention and Visitors Bureau  
 Nissan Buffalo Marathon - \$12,500  
 USA Soccer-Region I - \$25,000  
 USA Track and Field Region II - \$50,000  
 Binational Summer Events Brochure - \$13,000

Western New York Public Broadcasting Association  
 WNED Buffalo Niagara Guitar Festival - \$80,000

Arts Council in Buffalo and Erie County  
 Regional Cultural Tourism Program - \$75,000

Police Athletic League of Buffalo, Inc.  
 Fourth of July in Delaware Park - \$6,000

Canal Fest of the Tonawandas, Inc.  
 Canal Fest - \$2,500

and be it further

RESOLVED, that certified copies of this resolution be sent to the County Executive, County Comptroller, Director of Budget and Management, Commissioner of Environment and Planning, and the following sponsoring organizations: Richard Geiger, Executive Director, Buffalo Niagara Convention and Visitors Bureau, 617 Main Street, Suite 400, Buffalo, NY 14203-1496; Donald Boswell, President/CEO Western New York Public Broadcasting Corp., Horizons Plaza, 140 Lower Terrace, Buffalo, New York 14202; Celeste Lawson, Executive Director, Arts Council in Buffalo and Erie County, 700 Main Street St., Buffalo, NY 14202; Susan Gonzalez, Police Athletic League of Buffalo, Inc., 17 Meadowview Place, Buffalo, NY 14214; Robert Dann, Canal Fest of the Tonawandas, Inc., P.O Box 1243, North Tonawanda, NY 14120.  
 (5-0)

**BARRY A. WEINSTEIN, M.D.**  
**CHAIRMAN**